

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-14 and 23-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph as allegedly being indefinite. Applicant has added an antecedent basis for "inside panel" and "outer rim area" in claims 1 and 2, respectively, as requested by the Examiner. Applicant has additionally amended claim 7 to substitute "at least one of .. and ..." for "and/or," and has changed "in" to "of" in claim 23, as suggested by the Examiner. The amendments do not change the scope of the claims or add new matter.

Regarding claims 5-9 and 25-29, the Examiner suggests that "elastic" should be substituted by "rigid." Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. The support for these claims in the substitute specification can be found on page 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> full paragraph; page 9, last paragraph to page 10 second full paragraph; and Figures 8a-12b.

Applicant therefore respectfully requests the rejections of claims 1-14 and 23-32 under §112 therefore be withdrawn.

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-14 and 23-31 are rejected as allegedly being obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Japanese patent #5-330343 ("Seijirou") in view of Seksaria et al. A translation of the abstract of Seijirou is attached. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claims 1 and 23 have been amended to explicitly claim what was already implicit. Claims 1 and 23 recite, among other things, that "the door module includes a substantially rigid portion of long glass fiber reinforced plastic and a substantially elastic portion of plastic substantially free of long glass fibers and formed in one piece with the substantially rigid portion." The Examiner states that Seijirou discloses that the "door module (8 and 9)" of Seijirou corresponds to the door module of claims 1 and 23 and that the "weatherseal (6)" of Seijirou corresponds to the elastic portion. Applicant respectfully submits there is no teaching or suggestion in Seijirou that either the door module 8 or the door trim 9 is formed in one piece with the "weatherseal" 6. In fact, Figures 2-5 of Seijirou (particularly Figure 4) teach that the "weatherseal" 6 and, the door module 8 or the door trim 9 are not formed integrally or in one piece, as the weatherseal 6 is fixed to what the Examiner suggests corresponds to the "inside panel" 72 and is clearly shown in Figure 4 to be a separate piece from door module 8 and not even in contact with door module 9 in any of the Figures 1-5. Further, as the Examiner points out, Seijirou does not teach or suggest a substantially rigid portion of long glass fiber

reinforced plastic formed integrally, or in one piece, with a substantially elastic portion of plastic substantially free of long glass fibers.

Seksaria does not cure the deficiencies of Seijirou. Seksaria is directed to a woven metal mat which sits in a recess between an inner door panel and an outer door panel. The Examiner has not pointed out and the Applicant cannot find any teaching or suggestion of any plastic portion of a door module, a substantially rigid portion of long glass fiber reinforced plastic in a door module, a substantially elastic portion of plastic substantially free of long glass fibers or a substantially rigid portion formed integrally, or in one piece, with a substantially elastic portion. In fact, Seksaria teaches that "the elongated first elements and elongated second elements [in the metal mat] are preferably made from a metal of suitable strength, such as aluminum in wire, bar, rod or strip form." Col. 4, lines 30-32.

Because neither of the references alone or in combination teach or suggest every limitation of Applicant's claims, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-14 and 23-31 are patentable over the cited references and requests that their rejections be withdrawn.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication on page 3 of the Office Action that claim 32 would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of the claims 1-14 and 23-32.

Respectfully submitted,

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

1. (Currently Amended) A door module for covering a surface cut-out recess in ~~the~~ an inside panel of a vehicle door, the door module comprising:  
a substantially rigid portion of long glass fiber reinforced plastic; and  
a substantially elastic portion of plastic substantially free of long glass fibers and  
formed ~~integrally~~ in one piece with the substantially rigid portion.

2. (Currently Amended) The door module of claim 1, wherein the substantially elastic portion comprises a lip seal for extending along ~~the~~ an outer rim area of the door module.

7. (Currently Amended) The door module of claim 1, wherein the substantially elastic portion comprises attachment elements for attaching at least one of electrical and~~/or~~ electronic elements to the door module.

23. (Currently Amended) A vehicle door comprising:  
an inside panel with a surface cut-out recess; and  
a door module for covering the surface cut-out recess ~~in~~ of the inside panel,  
wherein the door module includes a substantially rigid portion of long glass fiber reinforced plastic and a substantially elastic portion of plastic substantially free of long glass fibers and formed ~~integrally~~ in one piece with the substantially rigid portion.